

*The Importance of Preaching*¹

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

- Isaiah 61:1-3, N-KJV

The preacher's task is important because, by using God's word, he proclaims good tidings about Jesus Christ. Jesus described the nature of his work when in Luke 4:18 he quoted from Isaiah 61:1-3. He declared that his work was to preach good tidings to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, to give recovery of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty those who are oppressed. Isaiah had also said of him that he would give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Did you notice that with this language the work of Jesus is described as turning desperate conditions into wonderful ones? So it is also that biblical preaching is uplifting. Biblical preaching announces **good** news about Jesus Christ, and what he has done for the good of all humanity. Gospel preachers have a positive message to meet all the sorrows of a sin filled world. Such preaching produces joyful results.

Biblical preaching understands the human predicament that in Adam, all have sinned, that sin has separated everyone from God, that no one can justify himself before God, and that without Christ everyone is doomed to suffer the penalty of eternal torment and separation from God. Biblical preaching understands that in spite of sin, God loves the world and wants everyone freed from sin, that he therefore gave his son Jesus Christ to die on the cross to pay the penalty for the sins of those who believe and obey him, and that believers may not only be saved from eternal torment and separation from God, but may also live eternally with God.

In this sin filled world, what profession could be more useful, more noble, or more meaningful than that of preaching this **good** news about Jesus Christ? Isaiah indicated that the work of Jesus resulted in believers being "trees of righteousness." Isaiah called them "the planting of the Lord."

The preacher's task is more important than that of any other. The physician heals, but his healing of the physical body has only temporal importance whereas preaching has spiritual and eternal significance. Jesus could heal the sick better than any physician, but he left healing to preach (Mark 1:30-38). The lawyer's task is to deal with the law, but a lawyer's concern with law is generally for time, not for eternity. Moreover, a lawyer's concern pertains to the physical not the spiritual realities of life. Law and medicine are two of the most honorable professions in any society, but preaching is more worthy of the best of human talents and energy than either of them, or of any other profession.

Name any other profession, such as being a school teacher, a counselor, a politician, a business man or woman, or whatever other profession you wish, and preaching is more significant because preaching turns sinners into saints, and gives guidance to life not only for time, but also for eternity. Preaching is the work of bringing humanity and all human endeavors into alignment with God and his word. What other work can be more important than that?

Every Christian young man, who is thinking about what he shall do in life, should consider being a preacher. Every Christian young woman should consider that her life may be more productive in the Lord by being married to a preacher. All Christian parents should want their children to be preachers and teachers of the gospel. Every church should encourage their young to be preachers and missionaries. Christian parents and churches would do well to assist their youth in preparing to preach and teach the gospel throughout the world.

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